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August 13, 2010

This edition of the COD Processing Update will remain on the COD Web site until a new edition is posted. We will notify schools via a COD Web Message when a new edition has been posted.

Grant Programs
ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, and TEACH Grant

COD News

NEW!

Peak Processing Reminders (08/13/10)
As our annual peak processing period begins, Federal Student Aid asks for your assistance in managing our call volumes by waiting at least 24 hours after sending a batch to the COD System before contacting the COD School Relations Center to report a missing acknowledgement/response. If you do not receive the acknowledgement/response within 24 hours, contact the COD School Relations Center to research the situation and ensure that the acknowledgement/response is sent to your school's SAIG mailbox.

Additionally, Federal Student Aid would like to remind schools the Applicant Services Department (800/557-7394) is available to assist your Direct PLUS Loan borrowers and endorsers in a variety of ways. These include:

- Providing information about credit status and denied credit decision appeals
- Providing information about obligations/responsibilities to endorsers of Direct PLUS Loans

The COD School Relations Center is currently experiencing unusually high call volume on the Applicant Services Department's telephone lines. Often the questions are requests for loan or disbursement status information and/or requests to change the student's address. Only the school can address actual loan or disbursement status questions and the school should initiate any permanent address changes on the COD System.

Federal Student Aid encourages schools to advise only its Direct PLUS Loan borrowers, endorsers, or borrowers experiencing issues completing actions on the StudentLoans.gov Web site to contact the Applicant Services Department at 800/557-7394 for assistance. Loan or disbursement status and other general questions from borrowers are best handled by the school.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this period.

2010-2011 COD Technical Reference August 2010 Update Now Available (08/11/10)
The 2010-2011 COD Technical Reference August 2010 Update is available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. The 2010-2011 COD Technical Reference contains development information for the 2010-2011 Award Year. For a complete list of updates, refer to the "August 2010 Change Tracking Log." If you have any questions about this material, contact the COD School Relations Center.

COD System Ready to Accept New National SMART Grant Eligible Majors for 2010-2011 Award Year (08/09/10)
In Dear Colleague Letter GEN-10-12 posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, the Department of Education (the Department) announced the eligible majors for the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) Program for the 2010-2011 Award Year. The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2000 has been updated to the CIP 2010 edition corresponding with the 2010-2011 Award Year. CIP 2010 includes many new CIP codes within the National SMART Grant-eligible fields.

As explained in a June 25, 2010 Electronic Announcement posted on the IFAP Web site, we needed to update the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System to accept the new CIP codes. We have completed the update, and schools may now submit records using the new CIP codes in 2010-2011 National SMART Grant awards via batch or the COD Web site.

As in the past, Volume VI, Section 9 of the 2010-2011 COD Technical Reference provides the list of eligible CIP codes for 2010-2011 National SMART Grant awards. We will update the 2010-2011 COD Technical Reference in mid-August to include the revised CIP codes. To assist schools until we update the technical reference, please refer to the CIP codes list provided in GEN-10-12.

We appreciate the community's patience as we updated the COD System. If you have questions about this announcement, contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/474-7268. You may also e-mail CODSupport@acs-inc.com.

Second 2009-2010 Verification Status Code "W" Warning Message (08/06/10)

On August 5, 2010, Federal Student Aid began processing a text message (PGTX10OP) as well as a Reconciliation Report (PGRC10OP) to schools that have one or more 2009-2010 student records still reported with a verification status code of "W". The message is a warning that disbursements to all students with a verification status code of "W" will be considered overawards and reduced to a zero dollar amount ($0.00), even though the disbursements were previously accepted in the COD System. The reduction of the affected disbursements is scheduled to occur on August 19, 2010.

A school that receives the warning message should review the accompanying Reconciliation Report and submit appropriate changes to the verification status codes for affected students before August 19, 2010.

Notes:
- For the conditions under which each verification status code should be used, refer to the September 28, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site

- A school does not need to submit a verification status code and should leave the field blank (nil = "True") if the student was not selected for verification or if a selected transaction was received by the school after the student was no longer enrolled.

Note Regarding Verification Deadline:

Some of the student records included in the Reconciliation Report may be for students who are still within the allowable timeframe for submitting verification documentation/completing the verification process as specified in the "Notice of Deadline dates for the receipt of documents and other information from institutions and applicants for the Federal student aid programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education" originally published in the Federal Register on May 26, 2010 and subsequently corrected on June 8, 2010. The correction notice is posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.
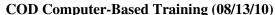
Following the August 19, 2010 reduction, if a school needs additional time to complete verification for an individual student in accordance with the allowable timeframe in the Federal Register notice, the school may resubmit a disbursement record with a value greater than zero ($0.00) until September 30, 2010. After September 30, 2010, the COD System will no longer accept "W" as a valid verification status code for 2009-2010 Pell Grant awards.

If you have any questions about the warning message or about reporting verification status codes to the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center.

Interim Funding Process and Preliminary Processing Information for 2010-2011 Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants (08/02/10)
As noted in earlier announcements about Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System updates, Federal Student Aid plans to implement COD System functionality to support the processing of Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants during the period October 8-9, 2010. In a July 30, 2010 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, Federal Student Aid outlines the interim process a school may use to request funds for its 2010-2011 Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants prior to October 2010. In addition, Federal Student Aid provides some preliminary information about processing these grants via the COD Web site.

Weekly Reminders

NEW!

COD Computer-Based Training (08/13/10)
Federal Student Aid takes this opportunity to remind the community of the availability of the COD Computer-Based Training (CBT). The COD CBT includes enhancements that have been made to the COD System, the COD Web site, and associated Web sites and software products through June 27, 2009.

The COD CBT consists of component simulations and CBTs. Each COD CBT component is explained below. The electronic files associated with each component, as well as information about downloading and navigating the COD CBT, are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. Under the "Tools for Schools" section on the home page, click on COD Computer-Based Training.

Note: With the implementation of the StudentLoans.gov Web site at the end of March 2010, the three electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) simulations no longer reflected the process for electronically completing Direct Loan MPNs and have been removed. We will post updated electronic MPN simulations when we next update the full version of the COD CBT.

The components of the COD CBT are as follows:

COD System Simulations – The COD System Simulations offer lessons that explain the COD Web site screens and functionality available to a school administrator. There are 14 lessons with text to guide a user through each area of the COD Web site. By entering fictitious data, the user can explore basic navigation and functions of the COD Web site and practice locating and creating information in a safe environment that includes tips for assistance.

Direct Loan Reports CBT – The Direct Loan Reports CBT includes several sections that explain the COD reports a school can use to assist with the administration of and reconciliation process for William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) awards.

Grant Reports CBTs – The Grant Reports CBTs are four separate lessons that explain the COD reports a school can use to assist with the administration of and reconciliation process for Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), and Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant awards.

Direct Loan (DL) Tools Simulation – The DL Tools Simulation demonstrates how to use the DL Tools software to assist with the reconciliation process for Direct Loan awards. Although the simulation can be used both by schools that use the EDExpress for Windows software and schools that do not use this software, the simulation is especially useful for schools that do not use the EDExpress software on a regular basis but are interested in a Direct Loan reconciliation resource.

TEACH Grant Web Site Simulation – The TEACH Grant Web site Simulation guides the user through the TEACH Grant Web site and includes a step-by-step walk through of the process for completing TEACH Grant counseling and completing a TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS).

If you have questions or comments about the COD CBT, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you e-mail your question or comment to CODSupport@acs-inc.com, please include "COD CBT Question/Comment" in the subject line.